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Q. *Why did Richard McLaren permit ITT to go ahead with the $1.5 billion merger with Hartford Fire Insurance after he announced that he was dead-set against it and was determined to carry the case to the U.S. Supreme Court? Did he sell out for a judgeship?—N.T., Boston, Mass.*

A. McLaren was rewarded with a federal judgeship because of his outstanding work as chief of the antitrust division of the Justice Department. Why he permitted ITT to merge with Hartford Fire Insurance is of course open to question. McLaren says he did it for the good of the nation. Some doubting souls suspect he was pressured into doing it for the good of Richard McLaren. Whatever the answer, McLaren and Richard Kleindienst will go down in history as two of the influential men ITT, through a variety of individuals and pressures, got to.